Sample Interview Questions

The following three sets of questions are typical of those asked by a CIF Associate during interviews with the executive director, board president, one or more of the most influential board members, one or more managers, and a few additional stakeholders.

Each set provides an example of actual questions that were developed from information provided on the application, application questionnaire, and conversations with the leadership of an organisation that participated in a workshop.

Each interviewee should be asked the same questions. This enables all of the interviewees' responses to be quantified and included in the PowerPoint presentation.

It's the responsibility of the CIF Associate to develop interview questions that are relevant to the needs of the organisation and workshop participants. The Associate should strive to keep the interviewees' responses focused on issues and ideas rather than personalities.

Set 1: Sample Interview Questions

1. In your opinion, to what extent has the organisation achieved its Mission and Goals?

   - Areas in which the organisation is doing well:

   - Areas in which the organisation is NOT doing well:

2. What major challenges are facing the organisation?

3. To achieve the Mission and Goals, which current activities should the organisation be more focused on?

   - Which activities, if any, should be reduced or eliminated?

   - What new activities need to be introduced or developed?

4. Do you think the current functions and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, Committees and Subcommittees are supporting the organisation's Mission and activities? What areas need improvement?

5. Are the existing staff and other resources adequate for the organisation's operations and future development? If not, what structure, staff and other resources would be required to support the achievement of the Mission and Goals of the organisation?

6. Do you think the current funding sources are adequate for the organisation's current operations and future development? What other funding sources should the organisation explore?

7. What are your expectations for the workshop? Are there any specific issues you would like to address?

8. What are the ground rules you would recommend we use in conducting the workshop so as to make it a productive one?

Set 2: Sample Interview Questions

1. What are the major changes since 1997 in the political, economic, social and technological environments that have a significant impact on the organisation?

2. What challenges have been or will be created by those changes?

3. What are the internal challenges the organisation needs to address?

4. What do you think the organisation should become over the next five years?

5. What do you perceive as the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation in achieving the desired state as described in question 4?

   - Strengths

   - Weaknesses

6. What are the perceived opportunities and threats?

   - Opportunities

   - Threats

7. How would you describe the existing scope of services in relation to the overall objective of the organisation, i.e., do services align with the vision and mission?

8. How would you describe the current organisational structure, management philosophy and style, culture, communications and systems? Are there any major areas for improvement?

9. How would you describe the governance structure, e.g., roles of the Council, Executive Committees, other committees, and Operations, etc? Are there major areas for improvement?

10. What are your expectations for the workshop? Are there any specific issues you would like to address?

11. What are the ground rules you would recommend we use in conducting the workshop so as to make it a productive one?

Set 3: Sample Interview Questions

1. Your organisation's application indicated that the organisation might not be doing all that it can to carry out its current mission.

   Do you agree or disagree with this assessment?   Agree   Disagree

   In your opinion, what should the organisation do differently in order to carry out its current purpose?

2. Your organisation's application indicated the organisation's vision, mission and business plans are still (may no longer be) viable in the context of changing political, economic, social or technological environments.

   Do you agree or disagree with this assessment?   Agree   Disagree

   In your opinion, how might the organisation need to modify its mission?

   In your opinion, how might the organisation need to modify its business plan?

3. Your organisation's application indicated the organisation might be weak in the following areas (list).

   Do you agree or disagree with this assessment?   Agree   Disagree

   What do you think the organisation should do to overcome (list weaknesses)?

4. Your organisation's application indicated that the organisation faces the following (list challenges).

   Do you agree or disagree that (issue) is a challenge? Agree   Disagree

   How do you think the organisation should address (list issues)?

5. Can you identify any other major issues or challenges that might impact the organisation's ability to carry out its purpose?

   How do you think the organisation should deal with (interviewee's issues)?

6. (List) have been identified as external opportunities for the organisation.

   Do you agree or disagree that (   ) is an opportunity? Agree   Disagree

   Can you please elaborate?

7. Can you identify and elaborate about any other external opportunities?

8. (List) have been identified as the core values of the organisation.

9. What are your expectations for the workshop?

10. What obstacles might prevent implementation of the workshop outputs?

11. What rules do you think should be followed during the workshop?

12. Explain how you think your organisation will benefit from participating in the Creative Initiative Process?